

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

This meeting of the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 on WebEx. The following members were present:

Dr. Alejandra Carballo
Dr. Jon Clements
Dr. Michael Davis
Dr. Pam Dixon
Dr. David Eshelman
Dr. V. Carole Smith
Dr. Shellie Hanna
Dr. Newt Hilliard
Dr. Efosa Idemudia
Dr. Cynthia Jacobs
Dr. Sean Huss

Dr. Scott Jordan
Dr. Randy Kelley
Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
Dr. Asim Shrestha
Dr. Jamie Stacy
Mr. Steven Junker
Dr. Brendan Toner
Dr. Masanori Kuroki
Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon

Absent: Dr. Sean Reed (*Secretary* - minutes compiled via WebEx Video Recording on October 14).

Guests: Dr. Barbara Johnson, Dr. Richard Schoephoerster, Ms. Pat Chronister Ms. Tara Malone

I. Call to Order

A. Approval of the minutes - from the September 8, 2020 and September 22, 2020 meetings. Dr. Jeremy Schwehm moved to approve. Seconded by Dr. Sean Huss. Accepted.

II. New Business

A. Curricular Items (delayed due to Special Session, will be on November Agenda)

B. Intellectual Property Policy Proposal (Hilliard-Schoephoerster). Dr. Richard Schoephoerster says that IP policy is there to protect faculty. He emphasized that this is a *draft* form of the document, and that faculty input is needed. He emphasized that putting intellectual property through a commercialization process will add to the public benefit. According to Schoephoerster, the university already has claims to intellectual policy but this gives faculty rights. Specifically, he referred to the intellectual property under contract, or created using university resources. He says that intellectual property could be a revenue source. Dr. Hilliard says that this is normal. Dr. Hilliard emphasized that most projects would not generate revenue for the university. He also said that grants for large STEM projects, for example, start

with at least .25M in support, emphasizing that university involvement would be very beneficial in those instances. Dr. Eshelman reported that his arts constituents were concerned about the university owning their creative thoughts. Dr. Schoephoerster indicated that a faculty member creating a CD or a painting (by way of example) that would be sold for \$100 would hold not interest for the university in this regard, but if a faculty member is going to create something that is worth 1M dollars, no matter what it is would be a different matter. He cited that the university would have a fiduciary responsibility to get involved, not as a leech, but as a partner, not just for the faculty member, but benefitting that person's department, college and students. There is no specific time-frame or deadline for input, but Dr. Schoephoerster is sending this to the Grad. Council as well, and after Senate and Grad. Council input, will be sending to the VPAA's office and the Board of Trustees. Dr. Clements asked senators to *contact Dr. Newt Hilliard with ideas on how to revise this statement.*

C. Professional Development Grant policy revisions (Treadway/Reed/Schwem)

Dr. Ellen Treadway, chair of Professional Development Committee, presented changes to the PDG application, citing that this year the PDG funds will only be available for tenure-track faculty. She emphasized that this is for this year only, with the hope that funds will be reinstated and available for application by all faculty again next year. Dr. Schwem pointed out that the policy is a *one-year fix* for the 2020-21 academic year with its budget constraints. He reminded the senate of the fact that the committee has been working on process changes under the normal funding structure.

Move to support this document for the 2020-2021 academic year, with the idea we would go back to the original document as funds become available in the future. by Dr. Newt Hilliard. Second by Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon. **Carries.**

D. Faculty Senate Budget Sub-committee update (Huss)

Huss Faculty Senate Budget Subcommittee Report. Committee is moving fast, collecting data. They are collecting data. Whatever they cannot collect easily, they are requesting from peer institutions. They have a framework in place and are working with department heads. There will be a survey. *Drs. Huss and Clements asked for ideas, information.*

E. Adjunct Committee Proposal (Tara Malone)

Ms. Tara Malone, head of Adjunct Support, indicated that the 8 members of that committee have their hands full writing a constitution, conducting a survey of adjuncts trying to redefine what their jobs mean, and they have been asked to review and update the Adjunct Academy in Blackboard. Ms. Malone reminded that there are about 170 adjuncts at present, and made a proposal to expand the committee to add three seats to Adjunct Support. She wasn't 100% sure whether or not they needed senate approval. *Motion to support the expansion from Mr. Steven Junker, second Dr. Jeremy Schwem. Carries.*

F. Shared Governance Standing Committee Proposal (Eshelman)

Dr. David Eshelman shared the purpose of the Shared Governance Committee---to promote shared to governance in a permanent committee, involving administrators and faculty. Dr. Bowen's Executive Committee had some questions regarding the purpose of the committee. Dr. Barbara Johnson said she will share that information with them. When they have their questions answered, the proposal will come before the Senate.

III. Old Business

A. VPAA update

Dr. Johnson says that the **HLC argument** was locked yesterday. She thanked those involved. There will be forums in late October and early November. There will be HLC mock forums to prepare. The meeting will be virtual. There is a team of five with an additional on-site reviewer from Little Rock. Visit dates are November 9 and 10. She mentioned types of evidence that she thinks she will need. For example, Dr. Christine Austin will reach out to people who have put together curriculum proposals. What were the results of those curriculum changes? Mock interviews will be the 5th and the 6th, so look for those communications.

Update on the **laptop parameter committee** to address students who did not have resources (laptops or computers). We ordered laptops with Cares B money; we have plenty of laptops to give out if needed based on survey response. We may need more hotspots, but there is correspondence with students regarding this. Even if we give students a hot spot, they need good coverage, or it isn't helpful. We have resources up on the webpage so students know where to go if they have needs. The goal is to have resources available if we go remote suddenly.

Dr. Johnson discussed **anonymous e-mails**. She doesn't know how to address them and was looking for advice on how to ameliorate the situation. Dr. Shellie Hanna asked whether or not the form includes specific language that makes it clear that the information is coming in anonymously unless contact information is provided. Dr. Sean Huss asked whether or not there was still a form that channels those e-mails to the Senate. Dr. David Eshelman confirmed that those e-mails still go to the senate chair. Dr. Clements invited her to send e-mails to the Senate if they seemed pertinent.

Dr. Johnson shared an e-mail from SGA regarding **Pass/Fail**. Consensus was that students and faculty entered this semester prepared for virtual/online/hybrid teaching. Dr. Jon Clements pointed out that the decision was brought forward last semester in an emergency situation. Dr. Eshelman pointed out that, to his knowledge from the other Faculty Senate Officers in the state, that the rest of the state is also not returning to Pass/Fail. Dr. Jamie Stacy indicated that the only reason we might want to consider Pass/Fail again is if we go fully virtual again. Dr. Sean Huss indicated that we should announce that we are not going to consider Pass/Fail at this time to encourage them to turn things in on time. Dr. Jamie Stacy reminded that around this time e-mails that

include reminders about various things typically come out around this time. Dr. Johnson agreed that this would be a good place to include this information.

Dr. Johnson announced that the Trustees would be presented with a new scenario for the *budgetary* concerns in their Thursday meeting. They should be posting a link in case anyone wants to see that virtually. This is response to feedback from the Senate and other bodies after Dr. Branson's information sessions. There is now discussion regarding a reduction of the *contingency* from 2% to 1%. That is a big deal. They are now looking at a tuition increase and 1% raises in the future (not next year, but in subsequent years *if* we receive B and C funding from the state) because employees will be doing more work. Dr. Johnson made us aware that the budget shortage would not be as great as we had been originally told. We will still go through the bucket exercise, but she does not believe we are going to get hit at 20% as a division. She believes the cuts will be much lower based on the numbers that she saw. Dr. Jamie Stacy asked what the purpose of the 20% bucket exercise if we are really closer to needing to cut 10%. Dr. Johnson indicated this was because some units *will* be cut at 20% and some will not, particularly ones that she doesn't consider to be revenue-generating.

B. Faculty/Board of Trustees Communication (Clements)

Dr. Bowen is *not* in favor of a Provost. Dr. Clements asked that we continue asking though we are not expecting a return now. On Dec. 17, Dr. Bowen wants a *virtual townhall* with BOT members. They will be available to take questions, make statements and interact with faculty. We may want to have some questions prepared in advance for that. Dr. Bowen's request to extend the Senate Chair commitment to 2 years. He let her know that was not the current will of the Senate. He suggested that inviting the Vice-Chair to more meeting might help with that.

C. Certificate of completion for student evals (Laffoon)

Carey Ellis Laffoon requested to keep this in Old Business and revisit in the November meeting.

D. Handbook revisions (Schwehm/Huss)

Dr. Sean Huss and Dr. Jeremy Schwehm. Dr. Schwehm indicated that they separated these edits into 2 phases. Phase 1 Handbook Edits are more minor. Dr. Johnson had questions about the clause regarding tenure eligibility notification. Dr. Schwehm indicated the September 1 date was added to the handbook in 2018. Dr. Schwehm and Dr. Clements agree to hold consideration of Phase 1 and Phase 2 edits until November, in favor of communicating with department heads and deans.

E. Popular Vote for Chair of Senate (Eshelman)

Popular election of Senate chair. It passed by general election. Ms. Chronister will run it by Counsel to see if it needs to go to the BOT.

F. Tuition Waiver Policy (Eshelman)

Tuition/Waiver Policy and Provost issues will be put off till budgetary issues are of less concern.

G. Concerns related to the primacy of academics / Provost (Eshelman)

The Senate will continue to consider this.

IV. Open Forum

Jamie Stacy stated that there is a site on Blackboard for posting items related to Senate. This is a place where one can post information and make it available for any faculty member. This is under the *Organizations* tab in Blackboard.

V. Announcements and Information Items

Next meeting Nov. 10.

Dr. Stacy announced flu shots (Thursday, October 22nd from 9-noon and Friday, Oct. 23 from 1-3) Dr. Stacy also announced a COVID informational session at 1pm on Wed, Oct. 14.

VI. Adjournment

Dr. Shellie Hanna moved for adjournment. Dr. Jeremy Schwehm seconded. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jon Clements, D.M. President



Sean Reed, D.M.A. Secretary